things. For in thée I liue, moue, and haue my being of thée; I haue my welfare and good being: thou art a daily friend, & speciall good benefactor vnto me. I liue at thy cost and charges. I hold all of thée in Chiefe, and I finde that thou art neuer weary of doing me good: thy goodnesse towards me is vnchangeable. Oh, I can neuer be thankfull enough vnto thée for all thy mercies, both spirituall and corporall. But in such measure as I am able, I praise thy name for all, beseeching thée to accept of my thankesgiuing, in thy Son Christ, & to giue me a profitable vse of all thy fauours, that therby my heart may be fully drawn vnto thée: giue me, O father, to be of such a good nature and disposition, that I may be wonne by gentlenesse and faire meanes, as much as if thou gauest me many lashes. Pardon all mine vnthankefulnesse, vnkindenesse, and great abusing of thy mercies, and giue me grace to vse them more to thy glory in all time to come. Strengthen me, deare Father, thus to continue praising and glorifying thy Name here vpon earth, that after this life I may be crowned of thée for euer in thy Kingdome. Grant these petitions, most mercifull God, not onely to me, but to all thy deare children throughout the whole world, for Iesus Christs sake: in whose name I doe further call vpon thée, saying as he hath taught vs.

Our Father, which art in heauen, &c.

FINIS.

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FINIS.

A SERMON OF REPENTANCE.

A very godly and profitable Sermon, preached at *Lee* in *Essex*.

By ARTHVR DENT, *Minister of Gods Word.*

Published at the request of sundry godly, and well-disposed Persons.

IONAH. 2. 8.

They that wait upon lying vanities forsake their own mercies.

LONDON;
Printed by *Anne Griffin*, for *Iohn Harison*, dwelling at the Signe of the *Golden Unicorne* in *Paternoster* Row. 1636.

In Concionem *Arthuri Dent*, *G. Pudei* Carmen.

MAture resipisce precor, peccataq; linque:
Qui legis, aut audis, quisquis es, istud opus.
Si nova peccatis, peccata prioribus addes,
Olim hæc te contra Concio testis erit.
Hæc aliqui lecta flentes sua crimina multum,
Mutarunt mores, & nova vita placet.

The same in English.

THou that dost reade or heare this worke,
I wish thee to doe this:
Repent in time, and sinne forsake,
Amend what is amisse.
But if thou wilt adde sinne to sinne,
Not minding to amend,
This Sermon shall a witnesse be,
Against thee In the end.
Some that haue heard this read of late,
Lamenting much their sinne:
Haue chang'd their former manners, and
A new life now beginne.

To

To the Reader.

ALthough I was moſt vnwilling that this poore talent and trauell of mine ſhould euer haue beene broached abroad, and come to light, both becauſe it may ſeeme as a candle lighted at noone-day, as alſo, becauſe many other mens doing might more worthily a great deale haue beene publiſhed and committed vnto letters; yet becauſe diuers which heard it preached with a liuely voyce, were very inſtant, yea and more than importunate with mee to haue it publiſhed, vſing ſuch reaſons as I could not greatly gaine-ſay, I did at laſt yield ro their requeſts: and ſo this vntimely fruit is come abroad

to bee ſold in open markets. Let no man therefore bee offended, that I haue not ſtrained my ſelfe to flie an high pitch, to foame out the froth of mans wiſdome, and to make a great ſhew of learning, by blowing the bladder of vanity, till it burſt with ſwelling; but it is not my vſe; I ſeeke ſpecially the ſaluation of the ſimple and ignorant? and therefore ſtoope downe to their reach and capacity. Therefore I beſeech thee, gentle Reader, accept my good meaning: reade this without preiudice; like it as thou profiteſt, ſo ſhalt thou haue praiſe of God, and comfort in thy Conſcience.

A SERMON of Repentance.

LUKE. 13. 5.

I tell you nay, but except you repent, you shall all likewise perish.

The occasion of these words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, was, because there were certaine that shewed him the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their owne sacrifices, that is, murdered them as they were sacrificing, and so their blood was mingled with the blood of the beasts which were sacrificed. These men therefore thought that those Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans, because they had suffered such things: and that those eighteene also, upon whom the Tower of Siloam fell and slew them, were sinners above all the men that dwelt in Ierusalem. Wherein they did utter a secret corruption naturally engendred in all men: that is, very sharply to see into the sins of others, severely to censure of them, but in the meanewhile to

flatter themselues, and to be blinde-fold in séeing their owne sinnes. For these men thought, because the like iudgements did not fall vpon them, therefore they were well enough, they were not so great sinners, but rather highly in the fauour of God, according as many do falsely suppose, that they are alwayes the worst sort of people whom God doth most strike and presse with his punishing hand: hauing forgotten that God doth not keepe an ordinary rate here below, to punish euery man as hée is worst, or to fauour or cocker him as hée is best: but onely taketh some examples, as hée thinketh good, for the instruction and aduertisements of all others, and to be, as it were, looking-glasses, wherein euery man may sée his owne face: yea, and his owne cause handled; and that God is a seuere reuenger of sinne: that all men may learne by the example of some, to tremble and beware, lest peraduenture they bée worthily constrained to keepe their owne turnes, and to know what they haue deserued. These men which brought these newes to our Sauiour Christ, had taken forth this lesson: whereupon our Sauiour is iustly occasioned to correct their erroneous and sinister iudgement, and to teach them that they must not reioyce at the iust punishment of others, but rather be instructed thereby to repent.

And

And further, to signifie that God doth not alwayes most punish the most notorious offenders, as murtherers, thæues, robbers, whoremongers, blasphemers, quarrellers, scoffers, and such like: But reserueth them vnto the iudgement of the great day, and, as it were, fatteth them against the day of slaughter, and therefore hée answereth them negatiuely, and saith, No, or not so, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. As if hée should say, Are ye all of this opinion indeed, that onely monstrous sinners are punished in this world, and others let alone? Or that the Galileans, and those eighteene vpon whom the tower of Siloam fell, were greater sinners than all others? Or do you thinke because the same iudgements haue not light vpon you, therefore you shall steale away in the darke, and escape the iudgements of God? No, no you are deceiued: For I say vnto you, that except you mourne and lament for your sinnes, and fall to some agreement with God in time, you (I say euen you, which are so ready to condemne others, and iustifie your selues) shall not onely perish with the like iudgements in this present world, but bée euerlastingly condemned in the world to come. So that our Sauiour in so saying, doth thunder downe a most dreadfull sentence vpon all our heads: For hée concludeth and setteth downe,

that

that all men liuing vpon the face of the earth, whether they be high or low, rich or poore, young or old, noble or vnnoble, learned or vnlearned, simple or politicke, of what state, degree, and condition soeuer they be; liuing and dying without repentance, shall perish and be damned in hell fire for euer. The Scriptures are full of such thunderbolts, Ioh. 3. 18. He that beleeues not is damned already. And 2. Cor. 13. 5. Proue your selues, whether you are in the Faith: examine your selues: know you not your selues that Iesus Christ is in you, except yee bee reprobates? Where the Apostle flatly setteth downe that all those which haue not Christ dwelling in their hearts by faith, which is the housholdstaffe of Repentance, are no better than reprobates, cast-awayes, and condemned persons. But because the most people in these dayes are grossely deceiued in repentance, both concerning what it is, what it meaneth, what it worketh, what be the qualities and conditions of it, which be the causes, and which be the lets and hinderances: and also why, when, and wherefore we should repent: therefore I haue a present intent to teach, first what is Repentance: secondly, which bee her qualities and effects: thirdly, when we should repent: fourthly, wherfore we should repent: and last of all, what letteth vs from repentance: which order and me-

thod

thod of teaching, although some may mislike (as indeed with me it is not ordinary) yet considering the matter I haue in hand, I thinke it not inconuenient. But to the matter.

Repentance is an inward sorrowing and continuall mourning of the heart and conscience for sinne, ioyned with faith, and both inward and outward amendment. Inward (I say) in changing the thoughts and affections of the heart, and outward in changing the words and workes from euill to good. This repentance, no doubt, was in Dauid, who when he was couertly reproued by the Prophet Nathan, and his sinnes, layd before his eyes, did not stubbornely defend them, and so striue against God: nor yet secretly excuse them, and daube them ouer, but cryeth out in the bitternesse of heart, I haue sinned, and thereupon made the 51. Psalme; a Psalme indeed full of dolour and heauinesse: wherein the Prophet bewaileth his faults, lamenteth his sins, and prayeth euen for a new Heart, and a new Spirit, new Thoughts, new Affections, new promises of amendment of life: so that in Dauid we may see an inward sorrowing, a lasting griefe (as the Booke of Psalmes doth euery where declare, which layeth him out as it were in an Anatomy) yea, and great reformation, both in inward and outward sinnes. Here therefore behold what is Repentance.

Like-

Likewise Saint Peter through infirmity hauing denyed his Lord and Master Christ, and being pinched of his owne conscience, and wakened with the alarme of a poore Cockes crowing, went out of the Court of Pilate, with a heauy heart weeping bitterly, and euer after stoutly professing Christ euen vnto the death. See then what is Repentance. The Prophets, in the Old Testament, exhorting the rebellious Iewes vnto Repentance, vse commonly an Hebrew Verbe, which signifies, Turne yée, or Repent yee, and come backe againe: by the which Metaphor is meant, that like as a man that is strayed farre out of his way, must returne quite backe againe the contrary way: So those that haue strayed from the way of godlinesse to the way of sinne, must come back againe as fast as euer they went forward, and altogether change the course of their life: So that repentance is an earnest turning vnto God, with all your heart, soule, and minde. Saint Iohn Baptist, and the Apostles in the new Testament, exhorting vnto Repentance, vse the Greeke word, which signifyeth a changing of the minde afterward, or after-wit: So that those which through their folly, and want of former wit, haue slipped into the deepe pit and dangerous gulfe of sinne, when they come vnto themselues, and haue recouered their wits, will

will be wise afterward, and take heed they neuer come there againe, according to the Prouerbe: The burnt Childe will take heede of the fire. By this time, I hope you see what is Repentance: It is not euery sorrow, but sorrow for sinne, not for some sinne, but for all sinne: not for an houre; but for euer: Not for a day; but continually: Not for a weeke; but as long as wee liue. Some thinke euery sorrow is Repentance, but so should Worldlings repent. Some thinke euery little pang for sinne is Repentance, so should Pharaoh repent. Some thinke all weeping and lamenting for sinne is Repentance, so should Esau, Iudas, and Cain repent. Some thinke euery little humbling of our selues is Repentance, but so should Ahab repent. Some thinke that good workes, and good purposes are Repentance, but so should euery sicke man repent. Some thinke that a reformation of words and deeds are Repentance, but so should ciuill men repent. Some think that to cry God mercie is Repentance, and so should euery foole repent. You see therefore how many are deceiued in Repentance. But if you will see what it is indeed, looke backe to that which hath beene said before: for he that will repent in good earnest, must not hang downe his head like a bulrush for a day onely, and so haue done: Nor cry from the teeth outward,

Lord

Lord haue mercie vpon me, and so away; but hée must make a backe reckoning, with diligent consideration of his former life, as did the Prophet Dauid, Psal. 119. 50. I haue considered my wayes, and turned my feet vnto thy Testimonies. So must euery one that meaneth to repent, slinke aside into some corner or out-place, that there hée may haue rome enough to beat his owne Conscience, and to make his Heart smart for his sinnes, by aggrauation thereof, and weighing all the circumstances, as in the ninth of Daniel: The Church of God confesseth her sinnes, not lightly, but with wonderfull great exaggeration, and heaping up one thing to an other. So that it is not enough to say, I haue sinned: but to say, I haue most traiterously sinned, I haue most obstinately, carelesly, and rebelliously sinned: I haue monstrously offended in such a place, in such a house, in such a company, on such a day, in such a corner, in the darke I committed Adultery closely, when I thought none had séene mée, in such a chamber I defiled my neighbours wife, mine owne conscience doth accuse mée of it: in such and such a company I haue béene drunke, I haue spoken and railed against Gods Word. I haue mocked the Preachers, I haue spared no oaths nor filthy speech: and now (O Lord) Lord, what an vgly monster

and

and wretched villaine am I? Here I ſtand before thy preſence all naked, blinde, wounded, poore, wretched and miſerable, hauing deſerued a thouſand damnations, if thou wouldeſt enter into iudgement, and try the Law with me. Therefore I beſéech thée to ſhew pity and compaſſion vpon mée. Anoint my wounds with the oyle of mercie, reſtore me my ſight. cloath my nakednelle, enrich mée that am poore, ſtrengthen me that am weake, helpe mée that am fallen: O bid me not farewell. The infant ouer-commeth his mother with crying, the childe his father with weeping, and the ſeruant his maſter by entreaty, and wilt thou not be intreated, O Lord? Thus, I ſay, if euery man would ſpeake in his conſcience to God, and thus narrowly, or more narrowly examine himſelfe, vndoubtedly hee were in the way to Repentance.

But alas, it is a world to ſée how the blinde Buzzards, and crooked Canker-wormes of this world goe awry from this rule, deceiuing themſelues with the bare title and naked name of Repentance. Many (indéed) can talke of it, but few walke in it: many ſpeake of it, but few féele it: many deſcribe it, but few knows it. It is hid and locked vp from the World, and reuealed onely vnto Gods Children: many thinke they haue caught it,

when

when they haue but the shadow of it. It is so high that few can reach it: It is so deep that few can come to the bottome of it: It is so narrow, that few can enter into it: So wide, that few can comprehend it: So slippery, that few can hold it: So secret, that few can finde it: Therefore my deare brethren, I beseech you let vs pray vnto our God, that he would reueale vnto vs this Mystery which is hid from the world, that wee may see it, and know it, finde it, and feele it to our endlesse comfort, through Christ Iesus, which grace he grant vs.

But now, to the second point, concerning the qualities and fruits of Repentance: one especiall quality of Repentance is alwayes to bring with it Remission of sinnes: For where true Repentance goeth before, there Remission of sinnes must necessarily follow after: Not that Repentance deserueth Remission of sinnes, but because where God worketh Repentance, there hée pardoneth sinnes, because of his promise, as in Ezech. 18. 17. When the wicked turneth away from his wickednesse that hee hath committed, and doth that which is lawfull and right, hee shall saue his soule aliue. And againe, Isaiah 55. 7. Let the wicked forsake his wayes, and the vnrighteous his owne imaginations, and turne vnto the Lord, and hee will haue mercie vpon him. So here wee see to whom

whom forgiuenesse of sinnes, and the mercy of God belongeth: namely, to the penitent sinners, to those that leaue sin, and imbrace godlinesse, to these that forsake their owne wayes and imaginations, and turne vnto the Lord. And as for such as walke in their owne wayes, and follow the delights of sin, without any sorrow or purpose to leaue them, they haue nothing to doe with the mercy of God: and though Iesus Christ had suffered a thousand deaths (which could not be) yet shall no impenitent sinner haue remission of his sins by his death, nor any other benefit of his passion: for they belong onely to his Church and chosen people here vpon earth. He therefore that is not of the Church, he that is not grafted into Christ by faith, he that is not a member of his mysticall body, can enioy nothing by Christs death: If any man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and withereth, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they burne, Ioh. 15. 16. We read in the 29. of Deut. how God barreth all stubborne sinners from his mercy, and doth most terribly shoot out against them. He that heareth the words of this curse, and blesseth himselfe in his heart, saying; I shall haue peace although I walke according to the stubbornesse of mine owne heart, thus adding drunkennes to thirst: the Lord will not be mercifull vnto him, but then the wrath of

the Lord, and his iealouſie ſhall ſmoake againſt that man, and euery curſe that is written in this booke, ſhall light vpon him. So that God ſaith plainely, he hath no mercy for ſuch as walke in vaine delights of ſin, and in the ſtubbornneſſe of their owne hearts, adding drunkennеſſe to thirſt: that is, ioyning one horrible ſin to another: yet for all that it is a wonder to ſée how the blinde wormes of the world deceiue themſelues. For they thinke, whatſoeuer they ſay, whatſoeuer they doe, be it good, be it euill, whether they repent, or not repent, yet they ſhall bée ſaued by Chriſts death: as though they would make it a bawd to their ſins, and ſo worke that villany againſt Chriſt; I hope to bée ſaued by Chriſts death as well as the beſt of them all, ſay ſome. But where is thy repentance, thou miſerable wretch? Doſt thou thinke that Gods mercy is common to all? and Chriſts death a bawd for thy ſins? No, no, when it commeth to the vpſhot, thou ſhalt hop ſhort. For it will proue far otherwiſe. For thou ſhalt finde Gods mercy turned into iuſtice, and Chriſts death into wormewood, becauſe thou hatedſt knowledge, and chuſedſt not the feare of the Lord. Thus you ſée, my déere brethren, that repentance muſt néeds goe before forgiueneſſe of ſinne, and where it leadeth not the way, there the gates of Gods mercy are ſhut vp: and this is the firſt

quality

quality of repentance. It hath also another condition, and that is, to alter and change men from that they were before, not in substance and proportion of the body, but in the qualities and conditions of the minde. For whosoeuer hath truly repented, you shall by and by see a most marueilous and wonderfull change in him, so that he will not doe as he hath done, nor speake as he hath spoken, nor company as he hath companied, nor play the good fellow (as they terme it) as he was wont to doe, nor runne the same excesse of riot as he was wont. And this is that amazeth the world, and causeth them to hisse and foam at the mouth like wilde Boares, and to speake euill of them that turne vnto God: For the world loueth his owne, and cannot abide that God should plucke one feather from his wings; but repentance doth violently pull men out of the clawes of Satan, and change them from the condition of the world: for it maketh of proud, humble; of hurtfull, harmeleſſe; of cruell, meeke; of wolues, lambs; of lyons, sheepe; of adulterers, chaſte liuers, of drunkards, sober men; of swearers, reuerent speakers: of haters, friends: of despisers, imbracers: of scoffers, louers: of earthly, heauenly: Diuels, Saints, all these worketh repentance. Paul trauelled towards Damascus a Wolfe, a Persecutor, a Blood-sucker, a Ha-

ter a Despiser, but ere he came there, he was quite changed, and cleane of another minde: so mighty was he that met him in the way. When Iesus Christ sent downe the holy Ghost vpon his Disciples, according to his promise, there were some scoffers at Ierusalem, which mocked, and said, They are full of new wine: But the same men cried out by and by after; Men and brethren, what shall we doe to be saued?

Here was a most wonderfull and sudden change: See then the force of repentance when God striketh it into the heart of a man, and driueth the naile to the head (as they say) it effecteth that which all the wisedome and policy of man is not able to bring to passe: and when they haue prouled hither and thither, and layd their heads together, and sought all the corners of their wits, yet can they not tell which way to turne their hand, or where to begin to change the heart of a man, and to conuert him to God. Therefore repentance is stronger than all the whole world, and worketh that which all men with their naturall wits, fine heads, and deepe deuices cannot compasse: for the conuersion of a sinner is a worke supernaturall. Here then we haue a glasse to behold our selues in, whether euer we haue repented, or no: for if we finde not this change and alteration in vs, we haue not repented, and so consequently remaine vn-

der

der damnation. Therefore let euery man looke vnto himselfe: for marke how much he is changed and altered from his former wicked wayes, so much hath he repented. And hee that is the same man he was three, foure, eight, nay, thirty yeeres agoe, surely, surely, he hath not repented, and therefore abideth in damnation. I marueil then how these men, which neuer felt any change or alteration wrought in them, nay, whose Conscience telleth them that they are not changed, nor know what it meaneth, can haue hope of saluation? vnlesse peraduenture they beleeue not this doctrine, or thinke it to be false. I will send ouer these men to such as haue beene in the like case they now are, and yet thought they might doe well enough for all that, although both blinde in iudgement, and corrupt in conuersation. I haue knowne and doe know men, which before their conuersion and inward change, were counted as honest men as euer brake bread, and as substantiall men as any could be, and as true dealers, vpright liuers, good house-keepers, as any of their neighbours: yea, and they had the same opinion of themselues too: and yet notwithstanding when they haue felt repentance working this change and alteration in them, through the power of the Spirit, at the preaching of the Word: and when they haue had new hearts

giuen them to discerne better, and new eyes to see better; as men come out of a dampe, haue wondered and maruelled at the palpable and grosse darknesse they were in before, and haue burst forth into these words, that they would not be in the same case they were before, no not for all the world's goods: for if they had dyed in that case, they were sure they should haue béene damned. But I pray you what case were they in before? were they not good honest men, and well accounted of, and honest liuers, and well taken whersoeuer they came? surely they were so taken in the world; but now they thinke farre otherwise of themselues, their eyes being opened, and their iudgements inlightned: for now they see what they saw not before: now they vnderstand that God condemneth many whom the world iustifieth. He thinketh this example should make ciuill and worldly men feare and suspect themselues, and know their owne misery before God. For those men were as good as they before their conuersion, and yet afterward confessed that they were plunged to the bottome of hell, and drowned in the depth of damnation. He that hath eares to heare, let him heare: and he that hath eyes to see, let him see: for if men will still soth themselues for all this, that they shall be saued, without feeling any change or worke of repentance, it will cost them

them full déere in the end. For Chriſts words will proue true, that whoſoeuer repenteth not ſhall be damned; that is, whoſoeuer doth not feele in himſelfe what is repentance, and finde in himſelfe the qualities thereof, ſhall bée condemned: for where repentance is, there be the qualities of repentance; and where the qualities be abſent, there is no true repentance. So that where Chriſt ſaith, Except yee repent, yee ſhall all periſh, it is all one as if hée had ſaid, except you know the truth of repentance, except you can proue vnto your conſciences the forgiueneſſe of your ſins, except yée feele a change and alteration in the bottome of your hearts for all your former lewd waies & miſdemeanours, you ſhall ſurely periſh and be damned. But let vs a little further ſearch out the qualities of repentance. The Apoſtle in the 7. chap of the 2. Epiſtle to the Corinthians, ſetteth downe ſeuen notable qualities and effects of repentance.

The firſt of them he nameth Care: For behold (ſaith he) this thing, that you haue beene godlily ſorry, what care it hath wrought in you? this is an earneſt ſtudy, and as it were a taking thought to pleaſe God: for where true repentance hath once wrought, there followeth great care afterward: care (I ſay) to liue in the obedience of God: care to keepe a good conſcience, care to reforme our houſholds, care to in-

ſtruct our wiues, children, and ſeruants in the knowledge of God, care to pray with them morning and euening: and generally, care to performe all duties belonging to God: So that Repentance is not a careleſſe, but a carefull thing. Let no man thinke therefore, that although they welter in careleſneſſe of the fleſh, and ſleepe in ſecurity all the dayes of their life, yet their repentance is good enough: yea, and though they ſpend whole daies, nights, months, and yeeres in vanities, playes, & paſtime in idleneſſe, fond delights, pleaſures & voluptuouſnes, in negligence of all duty, forgetfulneſſe of God, & contempt of all good things: yet for all this they repent for their ſins, and hope to be ſaued as well as any other. But alas, how can theſe things ſtand together, to repent for ſinne, and to delight in ſin; to hate ſin, and to loue ſin, to fly from ſin, and to follow after ſinne? But theſe men I perceiue would faine make S. Paul a lyar: for hee ſaith, A man hath neuer repented, except he be carefull afterward to pleaſe God: they ſay, they doe repent, and haue repented, although they liue neuer ſo wretchedly and careleſly. But when all licentious & lewd liuers, filthy whoremongers, beaſtly belly-gods, and careleſſe caitiffes, come to the kingdome of God, and are ſaued, then ſhall theſe men come alſo with them, to be ſaued by careleſſe repentance.

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The next quality and effect of repentance is named. Clearing of our selues, that is, discharging of our selues when sinne doth accuse vs, and lay things to our charge: for when sin and Satan doe terrifie the conscience of the poore penitent sinner, by and by he flyeth vnto God, and asketh forgiuenesse through Iesus Christ, so clearing himselfe, and making his apology against sinne and Satan: like as a man that is presented into the Court vpon suspition of whoredome, or any other notorious crime, must cleare himselfe by witnesse, of that which is laid to his charge; so the conscience that is cited by Satan before the iustice and iudgement-seat of God, cleareth it selfe by repentance, and asketh forgiuenesse through Iesus Christ. So that here we may see a wonderfull fruit of a penitent conscience: it cannot abide the accusation of sinne, it cannot be quiet till it be reconciled vnto God, and so haue peace with it selfe. For this is to be noted in a godly man, that when he hath committed any sinne, and his conscience telleth him of it, by and by he feeles lead within him, and is all heauie, and cannot sleepe quietly, till he haue gotten into some corner, where hee may mourn and lament to the full, & confesse and lay open himselfe vnto God, and so cleare himselfe through Iesus Christ his conscience bearing him witnesse that his sin is forgiuen. Wher-

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as contrariwise, the vngodly man, when his conscience accuseth him of sinne, he dispatcheth away all such thoughts, and treadeth them vnder-foot: and by and by calleth for a paire of Cards or Tables, or some merry companion, to driue away time, and to put out all such thoughts out of his head: and so indeed hee increaseth them more and more, and causeth them to ranckle inwardly.

The third quality is called Indignation: that is, a mortall and deadly hatred against sinne, as when a man doth shudder and shake, and as it were, grinde his teeth at the remembrance of his sinnes: For this is alwaies in the penitent person, to loathe and abhorre all sinne from his heart, both his owne sinnes, and the sinnes of others, and to hate it, as the diuell himselfe, which is the author of it: and to flye from it, as from the very cut-throat and hangman of his soule, and to know it to be the onely thing that blindeth and hardneth, that separateth from God, and procureth all plagues and diseases, both of body and soule against vs. Therefore he spitteth at it in defiance, and disdaineth it, and stoppeth his nose at the stinke of it, whersoeuer he smelleth it.

The fourth thing is Feare, which is a certaine awe of God, when a man is afraid to displease him: For the penitent person feareth alwayes,

wayes, and being priuie to his owne infirmitie and weakneſſe (when God neuer ſo little withdrawеth his grace and leaueth him alone) worketh his ſaluation with feare and trembling. He will not preſume vpon former grace to commit any ſinne, or flatter himſelfe in the mercy of God, and the things that he hath already taſted of God, to yéeld to ſome little ſin, thinking he may doe that, and be the childe of God well enough, becauſe ſome of Gods children haue falne into greater: but rather he trembleth at the leaſt motion of ſinne, and is afraid of the temptation which Satan trappeth in the way, and is afraid when the temptations of ſinne are vpon him, to ſatisfie the hunger of ſinne: but rather he fighteth againſt ſinne, when ſinne fighteth againſt him, and preſenteth the feare of God before his eyes, (as godly Ioſeph in the aſſaults of Potiphars wife) to be, as it were, a tower of defence, and well-ſpring of life to auoid the ſnares of death.

The fifth thing is Deſire, that is, hungring and thirſting after righteouſneſſe. For the penitent man is rauiſhed with a deſire of good things: he deſireth to be euery day better than other, he deſireth to leaue euery day ſome ſinne, he deſireth to pray, he deſireth new knowledge, and new vnderſtanding of heauenly things. He deſireth to heare Sermons, and will ſtraine him-

himselfe to heare them. He desireth the company of the godly, thinking himselfe in heauen, when he is amongst them. He desireth the saluation of his very enemies, and prayeth for them. All these, and many other such like desires are in a penitent man.

The first quality is Zeale, which consisteth in the earnest embracing of vertue, and hatred of vice: so that the penitent person is zealous of euery good thing, zealous of Gods glory in all places, in all companies and amongst all persons. He cannot abide that Gods honour should be impeached, or his name blasphemed, or his glory trampled vnder foot by wicked men: but will open his mouth to reproue the wicked, and stand stoutly in the defence of Gods glory. He is not like the Atheists and dissemblers, which are alwayes as the company, that is, godly amongst the godly, a Protestant amongst Protestants, wicked amongst the wicked, a Papist amongst Papists, a worldling amongst worldlings, and a swearer amongst swearers, a weathercocke that turneth with euery winde. The pentent man, I say, is not of that stampe: but he is constant and zealous in all good things: he is zealous both against the pleasures and profits of sinne: though he might winne a whole world, or pleasure himselfe neuer so much by committing sinne against God, yet he will refuse

false it: for he hath learned from Christs mouth that it shall not profit a man to win the whole world, and to lose his owne soule.

The last thing is Reuenge, that is, the penitent person is so offended with the sinne he hath committed, that he will be reuenged of himselfe for it. As for example, if he haue offended in gluttony, he will reuenge himselfe by fasting two or three dayes after. If he haue offended in whoredome, he will be reuenged of his lust by haltering and bridling of them euer after. If he haue offended in couetous catching and polling of other mens goods, he will be reuenged on himselfe by restitution, as was godly and penitent Zacheus: and this indeed is a speciall fruit of Repentance, to reforme our selues in those things wherein we haue most offended. Now then we see (my deere brethren) what lyeth in the belly of Repentance, and which be her inwards: so that we must needs now come to the balacing and vnbowelling of Christs words: Except ye repent (saith he) yee shall all perish: that is, except ye haue this forenamed Care, you shall all be damned: except ye haue this clearing of your selues, you shall be damned: except you haue this Indignation, you shall be damned: except you haue this Feare, you shall be damned: except you haue this Desire, you shall all be damned: except you haue this Zeale, you shall

shall all be damned: except you haue this Reuenge, you shall all be damned. For our Sauiour Christ doth not speake of the bare name of repentance, but of repentance with her furniture and appurtenances: so that whosoeuer hath not repentance with all her qualities and effects, or at least, some measure of them, hée hath no repentance indéed, and therefore shall be damned: For except you repent, ye shall all perish. But me thinketh that I heare some men say, Here is nothing but damnation, damnation: you preach nothing but the Law, let vs heare of the Gospell. My brethren, I protest vnto you, that I speake in loue whatsoeuer I speake, I desire the saluation of you all. If I could winne but two of all this congregation, I would count my selfe happy, and thinke that God had greatly blessed my labours. And vndoubtedly, if I knew any néerer way to bring you to God, then by preaching the Law, to make you know your selues, surely, surely, I would vse it: Or if I could be perswaded that the preaching of the Gospell, & mercy, would do you more good, you should heare of nothing but Gospell, Gospell, Mercy, Mercy. But alas, I sée that euery careless and ignorant man presumeth vpon Gods mercy. I sée that euery filthy liuer, and notorious blasphemer abuseth Gods mercy, in applying it to himselfe without repen-

repentance, so that they would make Gods mercy a cloake for their sinnes: I see that euery man would faine be flattered in sinne, and heare of it no more, but haue the Gospell preached, which indeede belongeth not vnto them, continuing in their stubbornnesse: But onely to the penitent sinner which forsaketh himselfe, and groaneth and panteth vnder the burthen of his sinne. Therefore when I see you humbled with the conscience of your sinnes, and groane and pant vnder the burthen of them: when I see your faces blubbered with weeping, and your hearts mollified, and sorrowing with care, then will I comfort you, and cease to preach the Law. But I pray you, will you steale, murder, and commit adultery, and yet heare of mercy? Will you mocke, sweare, blaspheme, and raile, and yet heare of mercy? Will you serue sinne, hate vertue, and follow your owne lusts, and yet heare of mercy? Would you haue plasters before you haue wounds? Would you haue physicke before you be sicke? Would you be let blood before you haue need?

Would you not account him a foolish Physitian, that will minister Physicke to a whole man? Would you not thinke him an vnskilfull Chirurgian that will apply a gentle salue to an old festered sore, and not rather corrie it? Then know you, my brethren, that because you

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are full of grosse humors, you must haue strong purgation, because you are full of old festered wounds, you must haue corrosiue salues: for that is best for you, and the spéedest way to recouer your health: and forasmuch as you bée rough horses, you must haue a rough rider, and hard knotty timber must haue hard wedges, and hard strokes with a battle. We preach the Law, to driue you to Christ: we preach iudgement, to make you to séeke mercy: wée preach damnation, to bring you to saluation. But to preach mercy and forgiuenesse before men sée their sins, or know their misery by the preaching of the Law, is to preach the Gospell vnprofitably: For hée that is ignorant of the Law, knoweth not what misery is in himselfe, or what mercy is in God.

What father is there, who if his child should play the stubborne boy, and disobey him in euery thing he commandeth, would stroke his head, and say he were a good boy? and not rather seuerely correct him, and whip him with a rod? What master will commend his seruant for doing what he list, and not what hée commandeth him? Euen so we may not disobey and doe euill, and looke to be flattered to, and not rather chidden. Let vs know then, that though God vse searing, lancing, or corsing, and searching of the bones, and other violent remedies: yet in the meane while hée procureth our health by them.

them. And let vs further vnderstand, that for asmuch as there is no other meanes to draw vs to saluation but by the clensing of all our vices, and the same clensing cannot be done but by violence, when we be warned by the doctrine of the Law, so as our owne consciences accuse vs, although we like well to be now and then flattered and soothed, yet let vs seeke to bee spoken vnto earnestly, to haue our faults told vs, and to bee made ashamed of them, and to haue our dishonesty discouered, and not desire to be pleased: For it were the next way to make vs rot in our owne filthinesse, if wee should hold it in secret: and it would cost too deare the setting on, if wee should be so flattered by men, & in the meane season the heauenly Iudge thunder downe vpon vs.

Therefore, when any man commeth to a Sermon, let him first and formost make his reckoning to bee rebuked, as meet is, and let him vnderstand that it is for his profit that he is not soothed. And if he haue itching eares, let him lay them away from him, assuring himselfe else, that hee is fore-closed, so shall he neuer receiue the doctrine to his profit and instruction: and let him bee content to haue his sores rubbed and bewrayed, that hee may be brought to that which is for his welfare. If any man please a sicke body, what shall become of him? Shall hee giue him drinke euery minute of an

houre? shall hée giue him wine, whereas hee should giue him water? shall hee giue him sallets? it were the next way to poyson him. To be short, it is certaine that a man doth alwayes séeke his owne death, when hee would haue men to soothe him. But now, which is better, either that hee which hath the ordering of a sicke man, should yéeld to all his desires, or that hee should bridle him notwithstanding that he chafe and gnash his teeth, because hee may not haue his will in his desires? You see therefore how dangerous a thing it is to flatter and raise vp men with the preaching of Mercie, before they haue beene cast downe with the sense of Gods iudgement. Cease therefore to open your mouth, to make hue and crie ouer the Countrey, saying: They preach nothing but the Law, the Law, Damnation, Damnation; vnlesse you will take in Christ too, and make him one of the number, and accuse him of want of wisedome, because hee preacheth and cryeth out, that whosoeuer repeneeth not, shall bee condemned. For my part, I preach the Gospell to whom the Gospell belongeth, and the Law to whom the Law belongeth, and iudgement to whom iudgement appertaineth. And therefore hold your peace, and bée content to bée ruled by the wisedome of God. But now let us proceéde to the third generall point, which is the time when we

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shall repent. The holy Ghost in the Scriptures pointeth vs to the present time, and exhorteth vs to make that the time of our repentance: Ioel, 2. 12. Therefore also now the Lord saith: Turne you vnto mee with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning: Likewise, in the 3. to the Hebrewes: Exhort one another, whilest it is called to day, lest any of you be hardned through the deceitfulnesse of sinne. And in the same Chapter: To day if yee will heare his voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation. So that now, euen now, is the time of repentance.

Now while he calleth, now whilest he speaketh, now whilest he knocketh; let vs now therefore heare, let vs now therefore obey, let vs now therefore redeeme this day, this present Wednesday, which haue foreslowed so many dayes, which haue so long hardned our hearts, which haue let so many good things runne out and spill besides: let vs take vp this day, and make it the day of our repentance. Although wee could neuer be moued with any Sermon hitherto, yet let vs now bee moued once at last. Let vs now say, This shall be my day of repentance, I will deferre it no longer, but now will I turne vnto my God, and forsake all my former wicked wayes, and mine owne imaginations: I will now change the course of my life, and begin

anew againe. I will bee acquainted with Gods word, and take counsell there how to doe, how to behaue my selfe in euery action, I will not only reforme my selfe, but also my whole household, wife, children, and seruants, according vnto the same. Thus, my deare brethren, I beseech you, purpose in your hearts without any further delay: and be not like to Epicures & slack-graces, which say: Youth will be youthfull, and youth will haue a course, and what should wee make it so holy when wée are young? tush, there néeds but a sigh an houre before death, let vs be merry now, wée shall neuer bee younger: wée will repent when wée are old. As if (poore soules) they had repentance in their sleeues, and at their commandement, and that they could repent when they list. No, no, these fellowes shall pay for their presumption: For God will giue them ouer to hardnesse of heart and impenitencie, because they tooke so much vpon them, and made so long delayes, that in the meane season they might enioy the profits and pleasures of sinne. Therefore (good brethren) let vs not put it off from day to day, but let vs now séeke the Lord whilest hee may be found, and call vpon him whilest hee is néere: let vs take time while time is, for time and tide tarrieth for no man: Let vs know this to be the time of our visitation. Our Sauiour Christ wept ouer Ierusalem,

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because they knew not the time of their visitation. Hee reproved the Jewes, because they could discerne the face of the skie, but could not discerne the signes of the times. And surely in the end it will turne to our destruction, if we will not know this to be the day of mercie, the time of grace, wherein God stretcheth forth his hand vnto vs, and wisedome cryeth out in the streets. Therfore now while we haue the light, let vs walke like children of the light: the night commeth when no man can wo[rk]. It shall bee too late to call for mercy afte[r] this life, when the gates of mercy are shut[,] and repentance will be too late. Oh deare C[hri]stians, let vs remember the fiue foolish V[ir]gins, which because they ouer slowed the ti[me] had heauen gates barred vp against them vs all remember the fearefull and dole[full] ample of the rich Glutton, which being [in] torments, yelled and yelped for the l[eas]e and helpe that might be, and could [ha]ue it. An hundred thousand times theref[ore] better it is for vs, to leaue our sinnes now [to] mourne for them now, and now to repent, [an] hereafter (alas) when it shall bee too late [be]tter now a great deale to take some paines, straine our selues to leaue our sinnes, and t[o] make our hearts smart for them, than to be c[on]demned for euer, and to cry in the bottome of hell: Wee haue wearied our

selues in the way of wickednesse and destruction, and wée haue gone through dangerous wayes, but wée haue not knowne the way of the Lord. What hath pride profited vs? Or what profit hath the pompe of riches brought vs? All these things are passed away like a shadow, and as a a Poast that passed by. Wée haue set our selues against the children of God, wee haue had them in derision, and in a parable of reproach: We fooles thought their life madnesse, and their end with dishonour: but lo, they are counted amongst the children of God, and their portion is amongst the Saints: Therefore let vs know the time of our calling, and let vs not bée worse than the fowles of the ayre: the Turtle, the Crane, and the Swallow, obserue the time of their comming: the husband-man taketh his time, the Mariner watcheth his tides: Therefore let vs also take the time, and turne to the Lord whilst it is called to day: Which grace God grant vs. Now let vs returne to the fourth point, concerning the causes which may moue vs vnto repentance. Herein I haue obserued nine speciall things.

First, The great mercie of God leadeth vs vnto repentance, as Rom. 9. The bountifulnesse of God leadeth vs vnto repentance, saith the Apostle: God doth continually follow vs with his mercies and benefits, both concerning our soules

soules and bodies, wee haue no good thing which wee haue not receiued at his hands, wee hold all that we haue of him, and to him we are beholding for all: great is his mercie towards our bodies, and euery mercie & benefit either towards soule or body calleth vs to repentance: hee giueth vs meat, drinke, and cloathing, these call vs to repentance: hee keepeth vs at his owne cost and charges here below, this calleth vs to repentance: the Sunne, the Moone, and the Starres call vs vnto repentance: the birds of the ayre, the fishes of the sea, and the fruits of the earth crie out vpon vs both loud and shrill Repent, repent: all creatures moue vs vnto repentance. Our Creation calleth vs, our Redemption cryeth, our Sanctification knocketh, and our Election moueth vs to repentance; What could God do more for his Vineyard that he hath not done? therefore let vs repent.

Secondly, The iudgements of God moue vs vnto repentance; For all the thunder-bolts, Plagues and Punishments which God hath throwne downe vpon obstinate sinners, from the beginning of the world, are so many warning-peeces vnto vs, to awake vs out of the dead sleepe of sin, and to pricke vs to repentance. As in 1 Cor. 10. When the Apostle had cited diuers great iudgements of God against the old Israelites for diuers sinnes, hee concludeth;

Now all these things came vnto them for examples, and were written to admonish vs vpon whom the ends of the world are come. So that all the iudgements we reade of in the Scriptures, are so many admonitions, and as it were Cart-ropes to draw vs to repentance. All the iudgements we reade of, doe see, and heare of every day, knocke with maine strokes beat down-right vpon our consciences, to repentance. The vgly monsters, strange births, and fiery constellations, vnknowne comets, sudden deaths, maruellous droughts, vnwonted snowes, horrible inundations, forraigne wonders, strange apparitions, threatnings of heauen aboue, with flaming and shooting fire, trembling of the earth vnder our feet, and our houses ouer our heads, as of late dayes: What are all these, but as it were great Cranes with beames and Cable-ropes to draw vs to the Lord by repentance?

Thirdly, The Word of God helpeth vs to repentance: For as God in the old time sent his Prophets both early and late, to call the rebellious Iewes to repentance, so he sendeth abroad the ordinaries and Messengers in these dayes to sound vp the Trumpet of his Word, and [illegible] the siluer Bells of Aaron amongst them, to awake them to repentance: but alas, how lightly are they regarded? Who heareth their

their voyce? But surely this is the last remedy that God hath appointed; and if this will not moue vs to repentance, if this will not cure vs, then are we altogether vncurable.

Fourthly, the infinite number of sinnes wee haue committed, ought to bee so many spurres in our sides to pricke vs to repentance. It is sufficient (saith S. Peter) that wee haue spent the time of our life after the lusts of the Gentiles, walking in wantonnesse of lusts, drunkennesse, gluttony, drinkings, and all abominable idolatries. Now therefore it is time to repent. Oh that men would looke backe to themselues, as they were forty, thirty, twenty, or ten yeeres agoe! Oh that they would call to minde their open and secret sinnes, and me thinketh it should make their hearts bleed within their bellies to thinke vpon them: Oh that they would consider how much time they haue misspent, and how many other things they haue neglected, and altogether omitted.

Fiftly, The shortnesse of our life calleth earnestly vpon vs to repent. The time of our life is sixty yeeres and ten, and if they liue to eighty yeeres, yet is his strength but labour and sorrow, and so it is cut off quickly, and wee flie away, saith the Prophet Dauid: we haue spent our yeeres as a thought, therefore hee addeth, Teach vs to number our dayes, that wee may apply

apply our hearts to wisedome. Our life for the shortnesse and inconstancie of it, in the Scriptures, is compared to Grasse, to a Vapour, to Smoake, to a weauers Shuttle, which slideth away swiftly. Euen so the dayes of men passe away, no man knoweth how. Man is of a short continuance (saith Iob) and full of trouble. Experience teacheth vs, that to day a man, to morrow none. Hence away we must all, here is no abiding place for vs: how soone we know not. Therefore let vs repent.

Sixtly, the small number of those which shall be saued, ought to thrust vs forward to repentance. Striue to enter in at the narrow gate: for many (I say vnto you) will seeke to enter in, and shall not bee able, saith Christ, Luke 13. 24. And in another place hee saith, The gate is strait, and the way narrow that leadeth vnto life, and few there be that finde it. If men would consider of this, it would make them look better about them, and try with themselues, whether they be of that small number or no.

Seuenthly, Death threatens vs, which is very terrible to the flesh, and the remembrance of it very bitter to a man that is souled and soked in the pleasures of this World. It flattereth no man, it regardeth no person, it weigheth no friendship, it careth not for rewards, it is very grim, vgly, and cruell, and killeth downe right

where it hitteth. Therefore let vs repent.

Eightly. The day of iudgement, and second appearing of the Son of man. Hee will come as a theefe in the night, in the which the heauens shall passe away with a noyse, and the Elements shall melt with heat, and the earth with the workes that are therein shall bee burnt vp. Seeing therefore that all these things must bee dissolued, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conuersation, and godlinesse? saith S. Peter, 2. 3. The Lord Iesus shall shew himselfe from heauen with his mighty Angells in flaming fire, rendring vengeance vnto them that know not God, and obey not the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ, saith the Apostle, 1. Thessal. 1. I saw (saith Iohn, Reu. 20.) a great white throne, and one that sate on it, from whose face fled away both the earth and the heauen, and their place was no more found. And I saw the dead, both great and small, stand before God, and the bookes were opened, and another booke was opened, which is the Booke of life. and the dead were iudged of those things which were written in the bookes, according to their workes; and the sea gaue vp her dead which were in her, and death and hell deliuered vp their dead which were in them; and they were iudged euery man according to his workes.

In these places wee see both the suddennesse, the

the fearfulnesse and glory of Christs comming.

For hee shall not come poore and contemptuously, as in the first visitation, but he shall come very princely, royally, and triumphantly, to the great terrour of his enemies, when a consuming fire shall goe before him, and ten thousand thousands of Angells wayt vpon him: at what time the Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chiefe Captaines, and the mighty men, & euery bond-man, and euery free-man shall hide themselues in dennes, and among the rockes of mountaines, and say to the rockes and mountaines, Fall on vs, and hide vs from the presence of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lambe; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand? Reuel. 6. Therefore let vs repent.

The last thing is Hell torments, than the which nothing is more intollerable. Therefore saith Christ, Matth. 9. If thine hand cause thee to offend, cut it off, it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than hauing two hands, to goe into hell, into the fire that neuer shall bee quenched, where the worme dyeth not, and the fire neuer goeth out. The Scripture speaketh terribly to our senses concerning the estate of the damned persons calling it hell fire, damnation, the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for euer. In the thirtyeth Chapter of the Pro-

Prophesie of Esay, it is called Tophet, and is euen prepared of old, it is euen prepared for the King, hee hath made it deepe and large, the burning thereof is fire and much wood, the breath of the Lord like a riuer of brimstone, doth kindle it. These speeches are terrible in themselues, and very marueilously amaze vs. But if I had the tongues of an hundred men, nay, of an hundred Angells, yet were I not able to vtter them, as some (one day) shall feele them, much lesse were you able to conceiue them. If all the tortures and cruell torments that can bee deuised by the wit of man, were executed vpon some one, yet were it nothing to this. Wee poore wretches thinke there is no paine to a Cholick, or a cruell Ague; but if all the Cholicks, Agues, and other strange Diseases, could possibly light vpon one man, it were but a flea-biting to that which is to come. The paine is endlesse, easelesse, and remedilesse. The dayes of their hellish torments shall neuer weare out, nor their yeeres come to an end, the longer they continue, the lesse hope they haue; when as many yeeres bee expired as there bee men in the world, and starres in the heauens; when as many thousand yeeres are ended, as there bee stones and sands by the sea-shore, yet still there bee ten hundred thousand times so many more to come. Those that will not now bee moued in hearing,

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shall then bee crushed in pieces in feeling. All Drunkards, Swearers, Whoremongers, Usurers, Extortioners, Lyars, Pockers, Contemners, Secure persons, Jolly-fellowes, Ropstring Ruffians, Lusty bloods, the braue Lads of the world, and all other vnbeleeuers shall one day bee apprehended, and arraigned before the Barre of Gods Tribunall Seat, where the Maiesty of God shall stand aboue them with a naked Sword of Vengeance, and a Scepter of Iustice; the Deuill, that old Sathan, shall stand on the one side to accuse them, and their owne Consciences on the other side to condemne them, and the gaping gulfe of Hell vnderneath them, ready to swallow them vp for euermore. Then shall the dreadfull sentence of eternal woe and damnation proceed against them, Goe yee cursed into Hell fire, &c. There they shall drinke (as a iust recompence of their iniquity) the bitter Cup of Gods eternall Wrath and Indignation in the Kingdome of darknesse, and in the fearefull presence of Sathan, and all the cursed enemies of Gods grace: where the dolefull Drumme of Gods Anger shall euer sound through their eares, where euer shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; where shall bee confusion, woe, and endlesse lamentation: their gripes shall bee so great, their groans so deep, and their garbolles so intollerable, that they

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shall grinne like a dog in their infernall convulsions, and with howling and yelling cry out, woe and alas that euer I was borne: O that I had neuer béene borne, or that my Mother had borne mée a toad; so, then my condition should haue bene better then it is: cursed was the time I was begot in, the houre I was conceiued in, and the day I sucked my Mothers paps: cursed I was alwayes, cursed I am, and cursed I shall bée euermore: Wo, wo, how great is my torment? Whose heart doth not melt? Whose eares doe not glow? whose haire doth not stand vpon his head to heare these things? Therfore (déere brethren) let vs repent. If the mercie of God cannot allure vs, let his iudgements scare vs: If his iudgements cannot scare vs, let his Word moue vs: If the Word cannot moue vs, let our sinnes amaze vs; If our sins cannot amaze vs, let the shortnesse of our life dampe vs; If the shortnesse of our life cannot dampe vs, let the small number of those that shall bée saued afray vs; If that cannot afray vs, let death terrify vs; If death cannot terrifie vs, let the day of Iudgement shake vs; If that cannot shake vs, let hell torments shudder vs and rend vs in pieces. For verily (my brethren) if none of all these can preuaile, if wee will not for all this repent, but bée still obstinate, then wée shall all perish, and bée damned, according to

to Christs words. Now let vs proceed to speake of those things which hinder from repentance: which indeed, although they be in number infinite, yet at this time I will lay forth seuen speciall lets and hinderances vnto repentance.

The first is Vnbeliefe: that is, when men will not beleeue such things which are spoken and proued vnto them out of the word of God: that is it that vomiteth vp all good things, and poysoneth the very intralls of a man, and keepeth all good graces from vs, as appeareth, Matth. 13. 58. Hee did not many great workes there for their vnbeliefes sake: and in the fourth Chapter to the Hebrewes, it is said: Vnto them was the Gospell preached, as also vnto vs: but the word that they heard, profited them not, because it was not mixt with faith in those that heard it. So that here wee may see although wee heare neuer so much, yet if wee bring not faith with vs, wee shall neuer profit vnto repentance: for vnbeliefe taketh vp our hearts for Satan, and refuseth all the wholsome doctrine of Saluation, and doth so harden men in the wayes of sinne, that in the end they become past feeling, and cannot bee touched one whit, either with the iudgements or mercie of God, but count the one as blasts of winde, and made the other a couert for their filthinesse. You shall note some men, who when they haue heard their

their sinnes straightly ripped vp by the Word of God, and their iust damnation proued by the same, without spéedy and earnest repentance, will breake out into these words of vnbeliefe: If this bée as he saith, God helpe vs, I hope it is not so: I trust I shall doe well enough for all this, as long as I haue a good faith in God, and doe none no harme: Shall I leaue my pleasures and my profit for their saying? What? doe they thinke nobody shall be saued, but such as reade the Scriptures, and heare Sermons? God forbid, but those which do not goe to heare Sermons, should be saued as well as they: why may not one serue God as well at home at his house, hauing good Bookes and good Prayers, as by comming to the Church to heare Sermons and Seruice: Alas; these men stand too much in their owne light, and bewray what folly and ignorance is in them. For doe they thinke to be saued by any other meanes than God hath appointed? or when God hath auouched any thing in his Word, will they except against it, and so make God a lyar? when God hath once set downe a thing, and proued it to their faces, will they yet reply, when God hath told vs, that the preaching of the Word is the ordinary meanes of our saluation, shall wée hope to be saued, though wée contemne it, and neuer (or very seldome) heare

it? Is not this plaine infidelity and vnbeliefe, that when God saith one thing, wee will say another: when God saith yea, wee will say no, I hope not so? Yea surely, that is it that stoppeth the way to Gods graces, and barreth vs out from repentance.

The second let is, The Presumption of Gods mercie: for if men be sharply reproued for their sin, and exhorted to repentance, by and by they talke couertly, saying, God is mercifull, God is mercifull: as though God were made all of mercie, and that there were no iustice in him at all, And thus the wicked make Gods mercie an occasion to sinne. Which thing the Prophet Nahum in the first of his Prophecie doth sharply reproue: The Lord (saith he) is slow to anger, but hee is great in power, and will not surely cleare the wicked. But because I haue spoken before of this presuming and misapplying of Gods mercie, I will here passe it ouer, and willing you to note it as one speciall let vnto Repentance.

The third hinderance is, the example of the multitude: for that doth harden and embolden men vnto sinne; as when many Birds flicker and flocke together, they fall vpon the baite without any feare; but one or two alone will be afraid; euen so the examples of many sinne-companions doe embolden men to runne through

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the ſnares of Sathan, without any miſtruſt. Therefore it is ſaid in Exod. 23. Thou ſhalt not follow a multitude to doe euill. This is the thing which hindreth a great number from God; for they neuer looke vp vnto God, or to his word, but ſtare vpon the common doings of moſt men, and examples of the world; thinking if they doe as the moſt men doe, and as their Fore-fathers haue done before them, they are cocke-ſure, and on an euen ground. And thereupon ariſeth their deuiliſh Prouerbe; Doe as the moſt men doe, and the feweſt will ſpeake ill of you. But they haue forgotten Saint Pauls Rule, Rom. 12. Faſhion not your ſelfe like vnto this World. Theſe fellowes that ſtand vpon multitudes, will reaſon thus; We ſee none of the great ones of the world, none of the noble, none of the rich, none of the wiſe and prudent, receiue this doctrine, but onely a few ſhake-ragges, and beggarly raſcalls; and therefore it is a token that it is nothing worth, and that it is doubtfull, and not for vs to meddle withall. Loe what thoughts may crépe into our heads, and how ſlily Sathan may trumpe in our way and blinde-fold vs, and leade vs away in the darke, by doting vs with the example of the multitude. Therefore let vs take héed of theſe pit-falls which Sathan layeth in our way and not bee carried away with theſe thoughts

and reasons. The wicked beare themselues in hand, that they shall win the game, and that the gole goeth on their side, and there is nothing but crowing long before it be day, and great triumphing among them before any stroke bee giuen. and that because wee are but a handfull of people, and they a great multitude, and that in a manner the whole world agréeth with them to practise our death. Thus the Deuill doth cast a mist before their eyes, and closely leades them away from repentance. Therefore dære brethren let vs stand fast in the Word of the Lord, and not bee carried away, and bowed quite downe with the raging streame of the multitude, but let vs know it to be an especiall engine of Sathan, whereby hée driueth vs from repentance.

The fourth let vnto repentance is long custome of sinne, for that taketh away all sense and féeling of sinne, and maketh it as it were, another Nature vnto vs, so that wée may as well alter nature, as shake it off, when it is once thus sealed vnto vs through long custome. Therfore it is said, Ier. 13. 23. Can the blacke-Moore change his skinne, or the Leopard his spots? Then may you also doe good that are accustomed to doe euill. There the Prophet affirmeth that it is as hard to cure an old disease, that is bred in the bones, and to remedy a sinne that hath béene hatched and brought vp with vs, as

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to wash a Black-Moore white, or to change the spots of a Leopard, which cannot bee without destroying of nature. And surely, try it who will, hee shall finde it as hard a matter to leaue an old custome, whether it bee of swearing, of gaming, of lying, of whoring, of euill company, or of any other sinne, as to wash an Æthiopian. Therefore it is written Prou. 27. Though thou shouldest bray a foole in a morter, among wheat brayed with a pestell, yet will not his foolishnesse depart from him. So that as long as wee are in custome with sin, the dore of repentance is barred against vs.

The fift hinderance is, long escaping of punishment, for the wicked thereby are hardened in sinne, and driuen off from repentance: euen as an old theefe that hath stollen a long time, and escaped both prison and gallowes, is animated more boldly to proceed in his wickednesse, thinking hee shall alwayes so escape: So many filthy and lose liuers goe forward in their abhominatien without repentance, thinking that because God doth not incontinently punish them, and shew some manifold iudgement and signe of his wrath vpon them, therefore they shall be acquitted for altogether. Whereas contrariwise, if God should by and by strike them downe as soone as they had sinned, by thundering vpon one, and lightening vpon another,

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and raining fire and brimstone vpon the third, it would make them afraid. Herevpon it is said in 2 Pet. 3. 2 4. This first vnderstanding, that there shall come in the last dayes mockers, which will walke after their lusts, and say: Where is the promise of his comming? for since the Fathers dyed, all things continue alike from the beginning of the Creation. But let these men well know, that when God hath delayed a long time, and prolonged the terme of the wicked, at length hee will shew, that although he waited for their repentance, yet he forgot not their misdeeds, but registred them before him, and packed them vp vpon a great heap to increase the terror of his wrath.

The first hinderance is, The beholding of other mens ends: for when some men that haue liued a wicked and an vngracious life, and haue béene notorious sinners, euen to the worldward, so that euery man could point at them; yet if vpon their death bed they can say a few good words, and cry God mercie, and say their prayers, and forgiue all the world, and so die quietly, it is marueilous to heare how foolish people of the world will exalt them, and iustifie them, saying, He made a very good end, as any man could make, hee died as quiet as a lambe, and set all things in good order before hée dyed. Herevpon another wicked and monstrous

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barlet is incouraged to sin. For thinketh he, such a man lived as lewdly as I, or any man else, and yet hee made a very good end, and why may not I doe so too? But alas, these mens eyes are bleared; for to die quietly is not to die godly: to cry God mercy for fashion, is not to have God mercifull: to say a few Prayers from the teeth outward, is not to dy in the faith of Christ: for many doe all these, and yet die miserably.

The last let is, hope of long life: for while men feed and besot themselues in this hope, they are drunken in sinne, and deferre the day of Repentance, as the rich man in the 12. of Luke dreaming of his long life, cast off all thought of God, and the other life, and of Christs comming, and of all good things, and said within himselfe: Soule, thou hast much goods laid vp for many yeares, live at ease, eate, drinke, and take thy pastime. Thus the bleare-eyed men of this world, choake vp repentance, and quite smother it, by doting themselues with hope of long life. Therefore, my deare brethren, I beseech you by the mercies of God, in the bowells of Christ Jesus, that none of all these common lets may stay you from speedy and vnfeigned repentance, but that you may ouer-slide them all: lest happily you being found without repentance, and taken tardy in your sins, shall perish, and be damned, according to

sentence. Wherefore in conclusion, let vs with godly Ezechiah bee afraid of Gods threatnings, sorrow aforehand, stand in awe of God, examine our consciences, mourne for our sinnes, and lament inwardly, that when the wicked, who haue swimmed in pleasure here below shall enter into their eternall paines, wee may then, I say there haue eternall peace and rest: that when Iesus Christ shall appeare from heauen with all his Angells, wee may haue crownes of glory, and reigne with our God and our Sauiour his Son, and all his Saints and Angells, in the midst of all ioy, in the heauens for euermore. To the which ioy he bring vs all, which hath so dearely bought us, Iesus Christ the righteous. To whom with the Father, and the holy Ghost, be all honour, glory, praise, power, and dominion, now and for euermore. *Amen.*

FINIS.

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